

INTERVIEW OF FELIX JOHN PALUMBO

On December 27, 2001, Felix John Palumbo, also known as John Palumbo, was interviewed at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Palumbo was born on [REDACTED] Palumbo stated that he began working for Atlantic Chemical, later known as Metro Atlantic Chemical, Crown Metro, and Crown Metro, a Division of USM, in 1951. He worked for that company until approximately 1971. The company had been located in North Providence, RI when he began working of for the company. It had moved to Dudley Street, Providence, prior to the time that he left the employment.

Palumbo said that Bernie Buonnano was in charge of running the daily operations of the chemical company during his employment. Bernie's brother, Joe Buonnano, also operated the company, however, he was not at the plant on a daily basis. Bernie was in the office daily. He had some office help in the office with him.

Danny Patterson was in charge of shipping and receiving at the chemical company. Patterson would get his orders from Bernie and then he would give the assignments to the drivers. Patterson would tell the drivers where they should drop off the chemicals and where they should pick up barrels. Palumbo was unable to recall the names of the women that worked for Bernie in the office. Palumbo said that he was paid by a paycheck from the chemical company. His main job was to deliver chemicals in both drums and bags. At some stops he would pick up empty drums and he would drop the empties off at the barrel company (New England Container Company). Bernie also ran the barrel company, although he did not have an office there. His foreman at NECC was a male called Mackey or McCookie (phonetic). He recalled that the foreman lived in [REDACTED]

Dr. Gerald Springer, who spoke with a German accent, was the head chemist at the chemical company. Neither John Palumbo or his wife Theresa knew whether or not Springer was still alive or not. John and Theresa recalled that there had been a separate shed built along the side of the river across from the chemical company's main dock. This building was used to make or use a substance called hexachlorophene. It was understood that you should not breathe in very much of that subject. In addition, no smoking was allowed in the area. Theresa Palumbo recalled that Dr. Springer told her husband that he should not breathe much of the hexachlorophene if he wanted to have a family. Theresa assumed that Springer meant that the chemical could cause sterility.

Palumbo said that he was a driver for the chemical plant. He said that the chemical company and the barrel company operated together, however, as often he would pick up drums for NECC as well as delivering the chemicals. On some stops he would not deliver but would only pick up empty drums.



Palumbo (continued)

John Palumbo recalled delivering or pickup loads at the following locations:

Bates Manufacturing Company, Lewiston, Maine.

About once a week he would deliver 40-50 barrels to this company. In addition, the company's trailer trucks also delivered there on occasion. Chemical softeners used in the manufacture of cloth were delivered. Barrels were also picked up for return. The softeners were a pasty substance.

Hoechst Chemical, West Warwick, RI.

Palumbo said that he would pick up dyes at this company for delivery to Metro.

Worster Textile, North Providence, RI.

He delivered dyes to this cloth manufacturer. Sometimes he would deliver dyes to Worster after having picked them up at Hoechst.

Bonnie Esmond, North Providence, RI.

He recalled going to this location but could not recall the deliveries. The company manufactured blankets.

Lawrence Dye Works, Lawrence, MA.

Cloth dyes used to manufacture cloth were delivered to this plant.

Duro Finishing Company, Fall River, MA.

The chemical company delivered dyes and finishes such as resin 400T to Duro. They also purchased chemicals such as Accupel D. This company was owned by Eddie Ricci, a friend of the Buonnano's.

Newport Finishing, Fall River, MA.

This company was located next to Duro and purchased the same type of chemicals as Duro (above). Duro was a larger operation than Newport. Palumbo recalled that the owner of this plant was also from Rhode Island.

Putnam Hertz, Putnam, CT.

He delivered and picked up from this company.

Rockville Finishing, Rockville, CT.

He delivered finishes to this company and he also brought back empty drums, many of which had chemicals in them.

C and C Chemical, Dexter Street, East Providence, RI.

Chemicals were delivered to this location and empties were returned to NECC.

US Oil, Dexter Street, East Providence, RI.

Palumbo (continued)

Located near or next to C and C, US Oil bought chemicals, however more often he would pick up barrels from return to NECC.

Greenville Finishing, Route 44, Greenville, RI.

Chemicals were delivered to this manufacturer and empty drums were also picked up here for return to NECC.

Brown and Sharpe, North Kingstown, RI.

Palumbo recalled delivering to this plant.

Woonsocket Color, Privilege Street, Woonsocket, RI.

Chemicals were delivered to this location. There were no empties picked up.

Original Bradford Soap Works, West Warwick or Coventry, RI.

He both picked up barrels for NECC here and delivered for the chemical company.

George Mann Chemical Company, Providence, RI.

Chemicals were picked up at this company for delivery to Metro Atlantic.

T. H. Baylis, Warwick, RI.

Chemicals were picked up at this company for delivery to Metro Atlantic.

Eastern Color and Chemical, Livingston Street, Providence, RI.

Chemicals were picked up at this company for return to Metro Atlantic.

Palumbo said that he does not recall ever delivering or picking up materials at Otis Air Base, Quonset Point, Teknor Apex, or Thompson Chemical.

According to Palumbo, residue or waste in the empty barrels that were returned to NECC, was burned off in a pit. The waste would be burned and the remaining ash was usually dumped at the point at the lower end of the property.

The chemical company had drains on the floor that were used to wash out the chemicals. He assumes that the drains emptied into the Woonasquatucket River.

"Flammable" signs were displayed on the trucks when delivering certain chemicals. In addition, "Dangerous" signs were displayed when delivering corrosive and flammable materials.